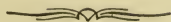


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“EIGHTY” CLUB.



THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

BY

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“LOCAL RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF FARM LABOURERS.”

“EIGHTY” CLUB.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE policy advocated in this pamphlet is, stated briefly, that the local authorities should be empowered to buy land and build houses for the people, letting them at fair rents. In London the County Council, and in other towns, the municipal body has already power to buy land for this purpose ; but the procedure is so complex that needlessly heavy costs are incurred and compensation is often on too prodigal a scale. Also, in some cases, the law makes it difficult, and in others impossible, for the public authority to *hold* the land when bought, and the representative body is compelled, after having invested public money in the purchase of land, to sell it, or let it on long lease, to some private company (see pp. 12, 25, 26, *inf.*) who will try to fix the rents so as to obtain 5 per cent. ; while the public authority would not desire to make a profit, and would be satisfied with 3 per cent. on the outlay. If the land has been obtained at a fair price and only 3 per cent. interest is sought, a reasonable rent would usually suffice.

In the rural districts there is, as yet, no authority which is likely to make any serious attempt to house the people. Yet the very spread of sanitation and the good work which some medical officers effect in causing insanitary dwellings to be closed, renders the need of housing more urgent than ever. Here, then, we must have *Parish Councils*, and they should be enabled to obtain land compulsorily with the sanction of the County Council.

It may be necessary to remind those who regard State action with suspicion, that the terrible overcrowding of London is largely due to the direct action of the State, by the various and numerous clearances of dwellings of the poor and working classes which have been made for street improvements, Railway Stations, Law Courts, and other Public Buildings, Board Schools, &c. This fact is pointed out forcibly in the Report of the Royal Commission on Housing (see p. 11 *inf.*) which we shall have occasion to quote frequently hereafter. If State action for demolition of the houses of the people is permissible (for proper objects), surely State action for housing is laudable.

Also, the State is the largest employer of labour in London, and ought to provide dwellings proportionate to the number of its employées. Again, the Church (Ecclesiastical Commissioners) and State own the freehold of a large part of the metropolis ; and the ordinary moral duty of a rural landlord to provide cottages for the labourers on his farms applies to Church and State also. A yet further argument may be drawn from necessity. There appears to be no other method by which decent homes can be provided for great masses of the people. And decent houses are needful for their health, physical, mental and moral. Every family in London ought to have *at least* three rooms, and in the country cottages should have each three bedrooms, and the resources of English statesmanship must be exerted so as to place the opportunity of obtaining such a home within the grasp of every worker.

THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

CHAPTER I.

The Report of the Royal Commission.

My object in writing this pamphlet is to place briefly before the public the wretched condition of the dwellings of the masses in London, and to explain the proposed remedies. It is divided into the seven chapters, viz. : I. Report of the Royal Commission ; II. The Present Condition of London ; Chapters III.—VI. deal with the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890 ; while in Chapter VII an attempt is made to indicate “The True Remedies.”

In 1884, one of the most influential Royal Commissions ever chosen was appointed “to inquire into the Housing of the Working Classes.” The Commission was granted when Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister, and the document appointing it was signed by Sir W. V. Harcourt. The Commission itself included, and the Report is signed by, the Prince of Wales, Cardinal Manning, the Marquis of Salisbury, Lords Brownlow and Carrington, Bishop Walsham How, Mr. G. J. Goschen, Lord Cross, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Messrs. Lyulph Stanley, E. Dwyer Gray, W. M. Torrens, Henry Broadhurst, Jesse Collings, G. Godwin, S. Morley, and Sir Charles Dilke (chairman). It comprised men of all shades of opinion and representing various classes, and its Report was unanimous, except as to the one point of “rating vacant land in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis on its capital value.”* Some, however, of the Commis-

* This was opposed by Lord Salisbury and Mr. Goschen. See also pp. 11, 17, *n.* below.

sioners signed supplementary Reports suggesting additional or more stringent remedies. A large mass of evidence was taken, and both the Report and evidence are published as Blue-books.*

It is hoped that this paper will be useful as a guide to those who wish to study the Report as well as affording a general outline of the subject to those who have no opportunity of consulting the Blue-book. I propose to deal entirely with the condition of the Metropolis, though the state of some of the other large towns (R., pp. 7—9, 29, 30; 2nd edit. pp. 15—17, 50, 51) and some rural districts (R., pp. 23—27, 73, 79; 2nd edit. pp. 41—46, 117, 126—130) was sufficiently disgraceful.

The Report

states that, though there was a great improvement in the condition of the houses of the poor compared with that of thirty years before, yet the evils of overcrowding, especially in London, were still a public scandal, and *were becoming in certain localities more serious than they ever were* (R., p. 4; 2nd edit. p. 9). It next glances at the legislation then in existence and passes on to the evidence. I will give some extracts:—

Overcrowding.

“The first witness who was examined, Lord Shaftesbury, expressed the opinion more than once, as the result of nearly sixty years’ experience, that however great the improvement of the condition of the poor in London has been in other respects, the ‘*overcrowding has become more serious than it ever was.*’ This opinion was corroborated by witnesses who spoke from their own knowledge of its increase in various parts of the town. The facts which were described to Your Majesty’s Commissioners as regards much of the central portion of London, which was especially investigated, bore out the statement of a witness, who said of the part of St. Pancras lying south of the Euston Road, that overcrowding had not increased there simply because the district had become so full it could not grow more crowded. The facts mentioned in evidence show plainly *how widely the single-room system for families is established*, and the statement of a clergyman from the centre of London that in his

* The Report is cited throughout this paper as “R,” and the references are made to the Report as published in its original (blue book) form. It has been republished (price 8d., Eyre & Spottiswode, East Harding Street, E.C.), and this edition is referred to as “2nd edit.”

district the average is five families to six rooms, will be found in certain areas to be under the mark rather than an exaggeration. In Clerkenwell, at — St. Helena Place, a house was described containing six rooms which were occupied at that time by six families, and as many as eight persons inhabited one room. At — Wilmington Place, there were eleven families in eleven rooms, seven persons occupying one room. At — Noble Street, five families of twenty-six persons in all were found inhabiting six rooms. A small house in Allen Street was occupied by thirty-eight persons, seven of whom lived in one room. In Northampton Court there were twelve persons in a two-roomed house, eight of whom inhabited one room. In Northampton Street there was a case of nine persons in one room. At Bolton Court, a family of ten persons occupied two small rooms. At — Bowling Green Lane, there were six persons in an underground kitchen. At — New Court, there were eleven persons in two rooms, in which fowls also were kept. In Swan Alley, in an old, partly wooden, and decayed house there were seventeen persons inhabiting three rooms. In Tilney Court, St. Luke's, nine members of a family, five of them being grown up, inhabited one room, ten feet by eight. In Lion Row there was a room 12ft. by 6, and only 7ft. high, in which seven persons slept. In Summer's Court, Holborn, there were *two families in a room 12ft. by 8ft.* At — Portpool Lane, there were six persons in one small back room. At — Half Moon Court, in a three-roomed house, were found nineteen persons, eight adults and eleven children, and the witness, who has had much experience in the neighbourhood, said that he could hardly call that house overcrowded as he knew of a case of twelve persons in one room in Robin Hood Yard, Holborn. In St. Pancras, at — Prospect Terrace, eight persons inhabited one room 10ft. by 7ft. and 8ft. high. At — Cromer Street, there was an underground back kitchen 12ft. by 9ft. and 8ft. high, inhabited by seven persons. At — Derry Street, the first floor front room was 13ft. by 12ft. and 9ft. high, and was inhabited by a family of nine, who had only one bed. At — Wood Street, on the top floor, there was a room 11ft. by 9ft. and 8ft. high inhabited by a family of eight persons. Evidence of the same kind was forthcoming from other parts of London. At — King's Arms Place, Bermondsey, there were, inhabiting the washhouse at the back, 10ft. by 5ft., a father and mother two children and two elder sons. At — Salisbury Street, a husband and wife and five children were inhabiting one room. At Metcalfe Court, three rooms were occupied respectively by four adult persons, five persons and seven persons. In System Place, one room was occupied by a man and wife with four children, the eldest of sixteen, in addition to a woman lodger and baby, eight in all, in a room 9ft. square. At — Neckinger Place, one room, about 10ft. square, was occupied by a family of eight, and at Druid Street, there was a room occupied by a man and wife and family of four, the eldest being seventeen years old. In Spitalfields, — Hanbury Street, is a house of nine rooms, and there was an average of seven persons in each room.

In no room was there more than one bed. At Notting Hill were found in St. Catherine's Road, cases of six and seven members of a family occupying one room." (R., pp. 7, 8; 2nd edit. pp. 13—15).

It should be remembered that these cases are only specimens, and though in some cases particular dwellings may have been improved or the houses demolished, they will serve only too well as specimens of the present condition. Eight in a room is common among the poorest class. A clergyman in Central London told me of twelve in a room; sometimes children sleep under their parents' beds; sometimes people sleep on shelves as on shipboard. After some remarks on the state of provincial towns, the inadequacy of water supply, and the power of water companies to cut off water are discussed. (R., p. 10; 2nd edit. p. 19.) The power is now mitigated by a recent Act obtained by the M.P. for West Ham.

A paragraph on closet accommodation follows:—

"In some parts of London they [closets] are used as sleeping places by the homeless poor of the class who haunt the staircases. In Bristol privies actually exist in living rooms." (R., p. 11.)*

The Commissioners next discuss "noxious trades," "structural defects" of dwellings, cellar dwellings (R., p. 12; 2nd edit. pp. 20—21), and jerry building, and then pass on to the evidence of Lord Shaftesbury on the

Effects of Overcrowding—Immorality.

"The effect of the one-room system is *physically and morally beyond all description*. In the first place, the one-room system always leads, as far as I have seen, to the *one-bed system*. If you go into these single rooms you may sometimes find two beds, but you will generally find one bed occupied by the whole family, in many of these cases consisting of father, mother, and son, or of father and daughters, or brothers and sisters. . . ."

The Commissioners proceed:—

"In some cases where grown-up sons and daughters sleep in the same rooms, lodgers are taken in addition to the regular inmates, a fact which greatly increases the tendency to immorality."

The Rev. J. W. Horsley, chaplain of Clerkenwell Prison, entertains the very strongest opinion that overcrowding is a great cause

* In a Sunday paper some time ago an account was given of twenty girls sleeping on stairs, &c.

of immorality.* However, one clergyman does not think that the bringing up of a large family in one room conduces to immorality, *provided no lodgers are taken in*. The Commissioners say :—

“There cannot be any question that every effort should be made to put an end to a state of things which familiarises children of tender years with scenes they ought never to witness. They add, however, that on the whole “the standard of morality among the inhabitants of these crowded quarters is higher than might have been expected, looking at the surroundings amid which their lives are passed.” (R., p. 13 ; 2nd edit., p. 24.)

Death.

“No one has ventured to express an opinion that they (*i.e.*, overcrowding and the one-room system) are not most destructive to bodily health.” Death-rates are frequently deceptive, because “the very poor die comparatively seldom in their homes.” (R., p. 14 ; 2nd edition, p. 24.)†

“Notwithstanding this elimination, the published death-rate sometimes reaches most alarming figures in localities where the one-room system prevails, and that without the outbreak of any epidemic. The rate of mortality in a certain quarter of St. Pancras was stated by the excellent medical officer of that parish, Mr. Murphy, to have reached in the year 1882 the enormous rate of 70·1 per 1,000, but this was a calculation for a very small number of buildings. In Wellington Square, however, which was stated in evidence to belong to a member of the St. Pancras Vestry, the rate the same year was 53·7 per 1,000, and in Derry Street 44·4 per 1,000.” (R., p. 14 ; 2nd edit., p. 24.)‡

* For discussion as to the *amount* and *kinds* of immorality sometimes induced by the “one-room” system, the reader must be referred to the Report.

† In London one in five of the population dies in hospital, workhouse or prison.

‡ In one street in St. Giles’s about four years ago the death-rate was 53 per 1,000 ; in Bloomsbury, a few hundred yards off, only 14 per 1,000. Sir Henry Cunningham, in a paper issued by the Mansion House Council on the Dwellings of the Poor, estimates the loss of life occasioned by the difference of death-rate in London, and in a healthy suburb such as Lewisham, as 20,000 a year. At the last meeting of the Social and Sanitary Society, Edinburgh (hon. sec., Rev. R. Henderson, 1, Ventnor Terrace, Edinburgh), it was stated that in some parts of that city *one half* of the children die before they arrive at the age of five.

Disease.

"But there is a great deal of suffering among little children in overcrowded districts that does not appear in the death-rate at all. In St. Luke's, ophthalmia, locally known as the blight, among the young, is very prevalent, and can be traced to the dark, ill-ventilated, crowded rooms in which they live; there are also found scrofula and congenital diseases, very detrimental to the health of the children as they grow up. Among adults, too, overcrowding causes a vast amount of suffering which could be calculated by no bills of mortality, however accurate. Even statistics of actual disease consequent on overcrowding would not convey the whole truth as to the loss to health caused by it to the labouring classes. Some years ago the Board of Health instituted inquiries in the low neighbourhoods to see what was the amount of labour lost in the year, not by illness, but by

Sheer Exhaustion

and inability to do work." (R., p. 14; 2nd edit., p. 25.)

"It was found that upon the lowest average every workman or workwoman lost about twenty days in the year from simple exhaustion, and the wages thus lost would go towards paying an increased rent for a better house. There can be little doubt but that the same thing is going on now, perhaps even to a greater extent. That overcrowding lowers the general standard, that the people get depressed and weary, is the testimony of those who are daily witnesses of the lives of the poor. The *general deterioration in the health of the people* is a worse feature of overcrowding even than the encouragement by it of infectious disease. It has the effect of reducing their stamina, and thus produces consumption and diseases arising from general debility of the system, whereby life is shortened." (R., p. 14; 2nd edit. p. 25.)

Drink.

The Commissioners inquire whether dirty and drinking habits are the cause or consequence of the miserable condition of the people, and decide that the evils of drink, overcrowding, and poverty act and re-act on each other. (R., pp. 14—16; 2nd edit., pp. 26—28.) Lord Shaftesbury says:—"I am certain the people who are in that condition have been made so by the condition of the houses in which they live." (R., p. 15; 2nd edit. p. 26.)

The *causes* of the evils of overcrowding and insanitation are stated in the Report as being:—

1. Low wages. (R., p. 16; 2nd edit. pp. 28, 29.)
2. High rents. (R., p. 17; 2nd edit. pp. 30, 31.)

3. Compulsion to live near work. (R., p. 18 ; 2nd edit. p. 31.)
4. Shiftings of population and immigration from abroad and from villages. (R., p. 19 ; 2nd edit. pp. 32, 33.)
5. Demolitions.* (R., pp. 19, 20 ; 2nd edit. pp. 33—36.)
Further causes of the evil are—
6. Relation of ground landlords to occupiers. (R., p. 21 ; 2nd edit. p. 36.)
7. Middlemen. (R., p. 21 ; 2nd edit. p. 36.)
8. Local Government in London. (R., p. 22 ; 2nd edit. p. 38.)

The Commissioners made about forty recommendations, a large number of which have been more or less carried into effect ; but some very important ones have unfortunately not yet been adopted.

They suggested that water supply should be in the hands of the local authority, and that companies should not be allowed to cut off water. They advised that prison sites should be utilized for artisans' dwellings. They proposed a reduction of legal expenses and the introduction of "betterment," the extension of Waterlow's Chambers' and Offices' Act, 1881, and other improvements which unfortunately have not, so far, been adopted. And their advice that vacant land near the metropolis should (when the present law of rating is reconsidered) be rated on its capital value has, as yet, only borne fruit in the education of public opinion.

CHAPTER II.

Present Condition of London.

SINCE the report of the Commission Sanitation has greatly improved. Liberal and Radical *Agitation* has done a good work, and the Mansion House Council, despite the opposition of Vestries and the apathy of the Local Government Board, has done much good, and would do still more if men and money were forthcoming. The reports and tracts published by it may

* "The pressure with all its evil consequence caused by immigration is *small* compared to that produced by demolition." (R., p. 19 ; 2nd edit. p. 33.)

be obtained from its indefatigable secretary, John Hamer, Esq., 31, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, E.C.

But still the condition of London sanitation is *horrible* in many of the dwellings of the poor. Of course the remarks on the single-room system do not apply to working men with anything like decent regular wages; but the working classes generally are very badly housed, and rents are so high that a large part of the people of London have not sufficient wholesome food, clothing, or the other necessities of life. As to overcrowding, I do not think the condition of the London *poor* has improved in the least. It is probably worse, on account of the demolitions, than before. And the pulling down of insanitary houses increases the pressure still more. (See R., pp. 19-21; 2nd edit. pp. 33-36.) But the Peabody Trustees, the Artizans' Dwellings, and Waterlow Companies and others have done a good deal to improve the housing of the working class above the unskilled labourer. The working man who can afford to pay for three rooms can obtain a sanitary dwelling more easily than formerly, but the poor man who can only afford one room for himself and family is probably worse off. Bitter complaints are made of the Peabody Trustees, that the buildings are no good to the real poor, that the Trustees prefer to take in men with regular employment, especially Government employment, policemen, postmen, &c., and not the poor. These Trustees are thoroughly unpopular in London; though their dwellings are usually sought after. As a single example of the effect of demolition, I may cite the Report* of St. Giles's Board of Works for 1888, which states that in St. Giles's (a parish of very small area) 153 houses occupied by the working classes have been demolished.

Rent.

Since 1885 rents of the richer classes have no doubt gone down, but it is not so with respect to the dwellings of the people

* These vestry and District Board reports are often very instructive. Besides the Report of the Royal Commission, reference may be made to the Report of the Town Holdings Commission. A considerable collection of pamphlets on Housing, &c., will be found at the National Liberal Club. See Appendix, p. 33, below.

in many parts of London. In some rent *may* have gone down, in others it seems to have risen. In Holborn 4s. is a usual price for a room, and 5s. not unusual. In St. Giles's sometimes 5s. is given for a small room. This is near where demolitions have taken place. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes said, at St. James's Hall, that 5s. 6d. to 8s. was given for a room in Soho.

CHAPTER III.

The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

This Statute consolidates and amends the three groups of Acts commonly known as Cross's, Torrens', and the Shaftesbury Lodging House Acts. It is divided into seven "parts."

Part I., headed "Unhealthy Areas,"* corresponds with Cross's Acts, and purports to enable the local authority to buy out the landlords of a grossly unhealthy *area*. "It is practically identical with Cross's Act, except that some of the Compensation Clauses are a little improved." †

Part II., "Unhealthy Dwelling Houses,"‡ corresponds with the Torrens' Acts, and purports to enable the authority to summons the landlord of a grossly unsanitary dwelling; and, if not put into order, the dwelling may be closed, or even, in extreme cases, demolished. Also, under this Part, the landlords of single houses, or of small groups not exceeding ten houses, may be "bought out."

Part III. || is entitled "Working Classes Lodging Houses," and is substantially a re-enactment of the Shaftesbury Acts. It purports to enable the local authority to buy land, and to provide not only lodgings, but separate houses or cottages for the working classes; or the authority may buy lodging-houses already built.

Part IV. contains various supplemental provisions; Parts V. and VI. apply the Act to Scotland and Ireland, and Part VII. contains the repealing and temporary provisions.

* Sects. 2—8.

† Adjourned Report of the Housing of the Working Classes Committee of the London County Council, Oct. 13, 1890.

‡ Sects. 29—52. || Sects. 53—71.

In the Metropolis (outside the City) the County Council is the authority for the execution of Parts I. and III. ; and the vestries and district boards are the authorities for Part II. In the City, the Commissioners of Sewers are the authority for the whole Act, and so in other towns are the *Urban* sanitary authorities.

Part I. does not apply to rural sanitary districts, and Part III. can only be "adopted" in them after a process which will probably prove fatal to any attempt at adoption ; but the Boards of Guardians are the authorities for the execution of the Act so far as it is applicable to rural districts. (See page 30.)

It is not necessary to describe the Act in detail here.

Statements of its provisions as affecting (1) the Metropolis ; (2) urban sanitary districts ; (3) rural sanitary districts—have been published by the Government ;* and a brief summary of its provisions as affecting the Metropolis has been circulated as a leaflet by the Mansion House Council.†

The primary object of the framers of the Act was consolidation only ; and, as Mr. B. F. C. Costelloe (a member of the Housing Committee of the London County Council), has pointed out,‡ they proceeded on an entirely wrong system. They ought to have picked out the good points of each of the three groups of Acts which they sought to consolidate ; but instead of this, they preserved most of the defects of each set with great care.

The *Amendments* made by the Act are of course a distinct gain ;§ but they are utterly insufficient and inadequate. It will, however, be a great gain if, now that the complicated and tedious provisions for housing the people are brought together in one Act, people will only try to study it.

Such a study would lead to an earnest demand for its instant repeal and for substitution of a more effective Statute, for its utter inefficiency would be promptly perceived. Still the Act should be used as far as possible until repeal.

* Price, 6d. each. Knight and Co., 90, Fleet Street.

† Obtainable from Mr. Hamer. See p. 12, above.

‡ See Paper read before the Conference on the Housing of the People.

§ Many of them were inserted or framed by Lord Compton and other Liberals.

CHAPTER IV.

Part I. of the Act and the Bethnal Green
Improvement Scheme.

WE have said that Part I of the Act purports to enable the Local authorities to buy out the landlords, but the experience of Cross' Act shows that the enormous sums payable for costs of compensation, lawyers and witnesses will render it impracticable for local authorities, however anxious, to do much housing under the present law. We may take the scheme now before the London County Council for clearing an unhealthy area in Bethnal Green as affording some illustration of the terrible difficulties and enormous cost of attempting to deal with what may fairly be styled a "deadly area," under the present law.

We give the following extracts from the Report of the Housing Committee of the London County Council mentioned above with the object of showing the condition of the population and the difficulties incurred by the County Council:—

"Your Committee have at various times personally inspected the area, and were especially struck by the narrowness of the streets, the widest measuring only 28ft. There is also a great difference of level between the streets and the floors of the houses, in some cases as much as 18 inches, and the appearance of the inhabitants indicates to your Committee a low standard of vitality. In many cases there are no back yards.

The total area is about 15 acres in extent, and is bounded on the north by Virginia Road and St. Leonard's Churchyard, on the west by Boundary Street and High Street, on the south by Church Street, and on the east by Mount Street. The streets are 20 in number. The average population per room is about $2\frac{1}{4}$, and 107 rooms have five or more inhabitants each. There are many small courts, of a very bad class.

"The area comprises 730 houses, of which 652 are occupied, wholly or partly, by persons of the labouring classes; the remaining 78 houses consist of 12 public-houses and beer-shops, 21 shops and factories, 2 registered lodging-houses (153 beds); and 43 empty houses. The population, exclusive of those in lodging-houses, is 5,566—*viz.*, 3,370 adults and 2,196 children, who occupy 2,545 rooms subdivided as follows:—

2,118 persons occupying 752 single-room tenements.

2,265 " " 506 two-room tenements.

1,183 " " 211 tenements of 3 or more rooms (781 rooms).

“Including those in the lodging-houses, the total number of persons of the labouring classes displaced will be 5,719.

“The above facts effectually remove any doubts as to the metropolitan importance of the scheme.

“The houses (mostly two-story dwellings) are generally small, old, and dilapidated. In many of them the ground floor is situated below the level of the street pavement, which renders the lower rooms very damp. The floors themselves lie on the earth, and there are no damp-courses. On the eastern side of the area are many ill-ventilated courts and narrow streets.

“The Medical Officer for Bethnal Green reports that ‘a low condition of health prevails in the area, and that this is due to the bad condition of the houses, and bad arrangement of the streets and courts.’ He further says that ‘the lighting and ventilation of many of the houses are defective, and that a number of them are insufficiently provided with proper sanitary conveniences, inasmuch as the only access to the closet in the yard is through a dark, badly ventilated cellar.’

“The opinion which has been formed by your Committee as to the condition of this area is fully borne out by the statistical evidence which has been adduced concerning it.

“The following striking figures are extracted from a report furnished by the Medical Officer of Bethnal Green. The details registered and relating to that part of the area situated in Bethnal Green, being nineteen-twentieths of the total area, give the following rates of mortality. Those in Bethnal Green as a whole are also stated for the purposes of comparison—

	Bethnal Green (1886—88).	Represented area (1886—88).	Represented area (1889 only).
General mortality	22·0 per 1,000	40·0 per 1,000	40·13 per 1,000
Deaths from zymotic diseases	3·7	7·9	10·71
Deaths from tubercular, &c., diseases	3·9	8·5	7·26

“It is therefore evident that about twice as many persons die in this area each year as would die if the mortality were the same as in Bethnal Green as a whole.

“Your Committee have made further inquiry as to the rate of infant mortality in the area as affording yet more precise evidence, and find that while in the four years 1886—89 in Bethnal Green as a whole an average of 159 deaths occurred annually among children under one year of age to every 1,000 births, in this particular part of Bethnal Green the average annual number of deaths of such children was during that period 252 to every 1,000 births, being in the proportion of three deaths to five deaths.

“It will be seen that, whether judged by the general death rates from those classes of diseases which are especially associated with unwholesome conditions, this area is pre-eminently one that demands a comprehensive scheme.

“The density of the population alone shows that some radical re-arrange-

ment is necessary, as in this area, consisting almost entirely of two-story houses, there are living 373 persons per acre, whereas over Bethnal Green generally, by the last census, the population is 168 per acre.

As to the important point of cost.

The Valuer's estimate* of the gross cost of the scheme is £371,000, from which must be deducted the estimated recoupment of £106,000. There must be added the engineer's estimate of the cost of the new and widened streets, a sum of £35,000, bringing the total estimated net cost of the scheme to £300,000, which, reckoning on a loan for 60 years, becomes a burden to the ratepayers (including interest) of £14,000 for the first year, a charge which will diminish each subsequent year.

The great cost of the scheme has been carefully considered by your Committee, but they are of opinion that the large saving of life which may be expected as the result of the scheme more than compensates for the cost.

It will be observed that the dead loss to the ratepayers of the single Bethnal Green scheme was estimated at £300,000.† *By the present law the ratepayers will pay off the whole (capital and interest), while the ground landlords of London will find their property (i.e., London) improved without directly paying a penny.‡*

The debates and discussions which took place with reference to the Bethnal Green "deadly area" are very instructive. It was agreed on all sides that the death-rate was shocking, and that the area ought to be improved. But serious objection to buying out the landlords were raised from most different quarters.

The following is a copy of a resolution of the Land Restoration League :—

"This Executive enters its earnest protest against the proposal of the County Council to evict 5,700 persons in Bethnal Green at a cost of £300,000 under a scheme by which not one foot of land will be retained, nor a single person re-housed for all this expenditure, the greater part of which will go into the pockets of sixty-nine landlords, most of whom have obviously neglected their duties.

* It should be carefully noted that these estimates were made *before* the Act of 1890, so that it is hoped that the sums will be somewhat reduced.

† See previous note.

‡ It *may* be, however, that they will be able to charge less rent in future cases, but tenants usually do not think this is so. Leaflets as to taxation of ground rents and values, taxing vacant land in urban districts, &c., may be had on application to the Secretary, United Committee for Taxation of Ground Rents, 18, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

“The Executive further protests against the alienation of any land whatsoever that may come into the possession of the County Council. Such land should be let on a perpetual lease with a revisable rent.”

Our next quotation is from an article in the *Globe* of Nov. 5, 1890, headed “London’s Plague Spots” :—

“Why the ratepayers generally, who share the risk of infection and the other evils of rookeries, but are in no way answerable for them, should be fined for the sins of offenders who can be identified, is not easy to perceive on any grounds of justice. Still less easy is it to perceive why the actual offenders, instead of being punished, should be allowed to see their way to making a good thing out of their own extermination. Owners of or speculators in slum property do not, as a class, deserve much public consideration. In gross cases of insanitation and non-repair, it may be almost taken for granted that the owners are persons whose sole principle is to squeeze as much as possible out of the tenants whose rents they constantly collect in person, and to give as little as possible in return. So long as their wretched tenements will let—and what is too wretched to let?—they see no reason why they should spend their hardly wrung money upon repairs which nobody thinks of asking for; indeed, the worse the state of their property, the more miserable to live in and the more dangerous as a source of pestilence, the more hope they may indulge of being brought out as obstructions in the way of reform. There is, indeed, plenty of reason to believe, as was pointed out last week, *that such properties have been actually purchased for the purpose of trading on the necessities of the authorities*, and that a goodly portion of the £300,000 required for abolishing the particular plague spot called the Boundary Street area will find its way into the hands of those lucky but singularly unsympathetic speculators.”

The *Times* said in a leader on the subject (November 5th, 1890) :—

“No one desires to secure for landlords who have neglected to discharge their elementary duties or even to comply with the law the right to be compensated at a high price for surrendering their property, yet this, according to several members of the Council will, under the existing law, be the effect of the Bethnal Green Improvement.”

We may hope that the London County Council *will* carry out the improvement and will insist on *holding* the land and not sell it back to private landlords or companies,* but it is obvious that they will not be likely to buy out many groups of landlords of an unsanitary district on anything like this scale.

* See page 25.

CHAPTER V.*

Part II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, and its Defects.

We have shown the difficulties of dealing with an unhealthy *area* under Part I.; we now show the strong position of the landlords of unsanitary houses where an attempt is made to treat them under Part II.

This part of the Act is chiefly taken up with provisions for shutting up houses which are "so dangerous to health as to be unfit for human habitation," and contains further powers for demolishing those which are not only unfit for human habitation, but actually dangerous to the public of the neighbourhood—that is, to the people who live near or walk past. Even here the utter feebleness of the Act is plain. You cannot compel a landlord to shut up a cottage because it is *only* "dangerous to health," it must also be "unfit for human habitation" in the eyes of the Vestry or District Board (elected with a property qualification), and of a magistrate. Here is a brief description of the tedious process. There may be *seventeen* stages before the sanitary authorities can pull down a house. The process even for obtaining a closing order (*i.e.*, an order for shutting up the house) is usually, in practice, far too slow, while that for securing the demolition of the house is simply scandalously long.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS TO OBTAIN CLOSING ORDER.

1. Four householders make written representation.†
2. Medical Officer inspects.‡
3. Medical Officer represents to Vestry.
4. If it *appears to the Vestry*§ that the house is so dangerous

* We here describe Part II. of the Act as affecting the metropolis. This "Part" is substantially the same for Urban and Rural Districts except the authorities are different. See page 14. The powers for Rural Districts will be found at page 28 below.

† S. 31.

‡ S. 32. If he does this of his own accord, step No. 1 is saved.

§ *i.e.*, they consider the case. They may also act on representation of any of the officers, or other information, instead of the medical officer's representation.

as to be unfit for human habitation, they (?) take proceedings for closing the house.*

5. They serve a notice on the owner or occupier.†
6. Application to magistrate for summons.
7. Hearing of summons by magistrate (with perhaps adjournments).
8. Here the landlord may hang up the matter for some time by appealing to Quarter Sessions.‡

Let us assume now that a closing order has been obtained. The following are the

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS FOR DEMOLITION.

9. Resolution by Vestry that *it is expedient* to order demolition of building.
10. One month's notice to the owner.
11. Hearing of owner by the Vestry, with possible adjournments.
12. If owner undertakes to do needful works, lapse of a *reasonable* time.
13. Possibly extension of time by Vestry, or the landlord may go to the magistrate and obtain extension of time.
14. Order for demolition.
15. Three months.
16. But this is *not all*, for within one month after the notice of the order for demolition the owner may appeal to Quarter Sessions.
17. Nor is *this all*. The court shall, at the request of either of the parties, require "a case to be stated" (this is a special kind of appeal) for the High Court.

This process is costly, and it will be found that in most cases part (if not all) of the costs will be thrown on the *rates*. It is no wonder that vestries often hesitate to put the law in motion.

But observe what is the net result when the house is closed or pulled down. One poor family is homeless, or even if the land-

lord repairs the house instead of closing it he often raises the rent.

SUPPLYING A NEW HOUSE AFTER AN OLD ONE IS CONDEMNED.

Let us suppose that the Vestry has obtained an order for demolition of a cottage. And it naturally occurs to the Vestry that it is not much good to demolish one dwelling unless it provides a better. The Act supplies the following ludicrous* process for buying an area of which the land of the condemned cottage formed a part :—

1. Resolution of Vestry.
2. Preparation of scheme.
3. Notices to every owner, or reputed owner, lessee or reputed lessee, and occupier of any part of the area comprised in the scheme.
4. Petition to Local Government Board.
5. Local inquiry by Local Government Board.
6. Order by Local Government Board sanctioning scheme.
7. Local authority may purchase the land by agreement—*i.e.*, at landlord's own prices.

If the authority will not pay each landlord and lessee what he likes to ask, the costly procedure is as follows :—

8. Notice in *London Gazette*.
9. More notices to owners in every part of the area.
10. Any owner may petition Local Government Board.†
11. If such petition is presented and not withdrawn, the order of the Local Government Board will require an *Act of Parliament* to confirm it, and the landlord may oppose, both before Committees of House of Commons and House of Lords.‡ The Committees have full power to award costs. They are generally very heavy.

* S. 39.

† If there is no such petition, Local Government Board may confirm the order without further ado.

‡ See SS. 39 (8), 9.

OTHER SCHEMES FOR RECONSTRUCTION.

The Act likewise empowers the Vestry (where they think that the closeness, or bad condition, &c., of any buildings, or the want of light, air, &c., or any other sanitary defect in any buildings is dangerous, and that demolition or reconstruction of the buildings, or some of them, is necessary) to prepare a scheme for reconstruction. Then come (as before, see p. 21) notices; petition to Local Government Board; local inquiry; then, if the Board cannot obtain land by agreement with *all* the landowners, publication of Local Government Board order in *London Gazette*; more notices to owners; and, if any owner petitions against the Local Government Board order, there must be an Act of Parliament, with liability to costs, in Houses of Commons and Lords as before! This is really to offer a stone instead of bread, to give a process of this kind for the people.

Then, after all this, there will be an arbitration to assess the *compensation* which the ratepayers will have to pay to the landlords. There are here some provisions as to reducing compensation in the case of insanitary dwellings, which are a step in the right direction, though quite insufficient.*

CHAPTER VI.†

Part III. and Its Defects.

WE now proceed to Part III. of the Act, which applies to the acquisition of land in general, and not merely to land where some house has been condemned, or to crowded alleys, etc.

This Act pretends to give to the County Council power to so

* S. 4.

† We describe in this Chapter this "part" of the Act as affecting the Metropolis. It is substantially the same for Urban Sanitary Districts, except that the Urban Sanitary Authority is the authority for the execution of the Act. Before a Board of Guardians (who are the *rural* authority) can adopt the Act they have to go through an elaborate process, which appears quite sufficient to prevent many Boards of Guardians adopting it. See Appendix I., p. 28, "Why the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, will *not* House the Rural Labourers."

acquire land ; but it clogs the power, so that they will be unable, and, having regard to the heavy costs which will fall on the rates, they will be unwilling, to do much.

The Act gives no power to any inhabitants, or householders, to make a formal representation that more dwellings are needed, nor does it even say it is the duty of the medical officer, or of the County Council or the Vestry to enquire whether such is the case. The Act declares (rightly enough) that it is their duty to turn people out of grossly insanitary dwellings, but it does not declare it to be their duty to see that wholesome ones are provided. This part of the Act is wholly *permissive* and has no effect whatever until it is formally “adopted.”

Then when the Act is adopted, the County Council may buy land, if the landowners will sell it. But if the latter refuse to sell, or charge an outrageous price, the County Council may obtain powers of compulsory purchase. To make out what these are we are driven to the Public Health Act, 1875. The process appears to be as follows :—

1. Advertisements and deposit of plan in November.*
2. Notices to and inquiries of all owners lessees, reputed owners, etc., of land proposed to be taken.
3. Petition by County Council to Local Government Board with detailed statements as to the land, etc., and such evidence as the Local Government Board may require.
4. Local inquiry by Local Government Board.
5. Notices of advertisement of proposed order.†
6. Provisional Order by Local Government Board. (But this order is of no force until it is confirmed by *Act of Parliament*.)
7. If a petition is presented against the Bill it may be referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, and the petitioner may appear and oppose as in the case of Private Bills. Of course, again, the costs of an opposed petition are enormous, and it is *very* unusual to make a

* Public Health Act, 1875, S. 176.

† Public Health Act, 1875, S. 297.

landowner opposing the taking of his land pay costs, if, indeed, it is ever done.

8. Ditto, ditto, in the House of Lords.
9. Act of Parliament to confirm the Provisional Order of the Local Government Board.
10. If, after the Act is obtained, the Council should refuse to pay the price the owner puts on the land, they may have the price assessed. For this we are driven to the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the subsequent statutes amending it. Of all methods of compulsory purchase known to English law this is the *most costly*.

As to costs of the landowner, these are payable in general by the County Council * thus :—

1. Costs of the landowner's witnesses, and of his solicitors and counsel on the arbitration (unless arbitrators award the same or a less sum than the County Council offered for the land).†
2. Landowner's costs of making out title, conveyance, &c.‡

And the County Council will have to pay the costs of their own solicitors, witnesses, and counsel. In some cases of disputed compensation the money has to be paid into court, and the County Council may have to pay another group of expenses. §

CHAPTER VII.

The True Remedies.

It is obvious that a quicker method of dealing with insanitary houses is required, and that other sanitary reforms are requisite. ¶ But this would not house the people, for when the landlord is

* The cheaper system under Public Health Act, 1875, S. 180 (13) does not apply here, *ex parte Rayner*, 3 Q.B.D. 446.

† L.C.C. Act, 1845. S. 34. ‡ *id.* S. 82. § *id.* S. 80.

¶ For some reforms needed in the Metropolis, see Report of the Sanitation Committee of the Housing Conference on the Housing of the People (Veale Chifferiel & Co., Cursitor Street, E.C.), and compare Public Health Law (London) Amendment Bill, 1891, which it is hoped will shortly become law.

made to close his house or it is demolished, the supply of housing is diminished and not increased.

The remedies then are (1) a simple and inexpensive mode of compulsory purchase, and, in all cases of unhealthy *areas*, compensation should be so calculated that the owners shall *not* be gainers; and insanitary *houses* should be taken by a summary process; (2) where the County Council buys land for housing the poor and working classes,* it should hold the land and let the houses at fair rates which the people can pay, and not sell the land to profit-making companies; (3) the funds for re-housing must come from some source other than the overburdened rates.† We will consider these separately.‡

(I.) COMPULSORY PURCHASE.

(a) In ordinary cases, when the landlord is not to blame, he ought to receive reasonable compensation and costs, and *no more*. The plan contained in the Bill of Mr. R. T. Reid, Q.C., M.P., for Housing the Working Classes in London¶ suggests a simple method of compulsory purchase which is easily capable of adaptation to all cases where local authorities require land for the growing needs of the community.

(b) In the case of an unhealthy *area* no costs should be allowed to any landowner, and compensation should be on such a scale as to make it clear to all landlords that it does not *pay* to have their district condemned. Perhaps it would be more in accordance with our methods that the landlords of the unhealthy area should be paid compensation in the ordinary way (as above), and they should be charged with a *Private Improvement Rate*.

(c) The process of buying a house condemned for insanitation should be a very brief one. The magistrates should be authorized to make according to the circumstances (a) a closing order, or (b) a demolition order on summons; and on making either order he

* See p. 19. † See p. 20.

‡ Registration of house owners in London and substitution of District Councils for the Vestries and District Boards are also most necessary reforms, but they fall rather under the head of Sanitation than of "Housing."

¶ Bill, 1889, No. 134. See also Mr. Reid's Acquisition of Land (Local Authorities) Bill, 1891, No. 268. This Bill appears to effect the above object for London and other Urban Districts.

should be empowered to make a "purchasing order," naming a price* at which the local authority should be empowered to purchase the property.

The price should be for the property as a whole, and should afterwards be divided among the parties entitled according to their estates and interests. No legal costs should be allowed to either side on the assessment of price. Rules should be made for assessing the price so as to exclude the risk of the owners gaining by insanitation, and finally the local authority should not be bound to buy at the price named. The owner of an insanitary house could not (reasonably) complain, as he is simply a criminal who risks the health and life of others out of his greed, negligence, or ignorance of his duty as a landlord.†

The loss of life occasioned by murderers is utterly inconsiderable compared with the lives lost through landlords; and the loss of wealth through burglary must be far less than the loss of actual money by sickness occasioned by the landlords of insanitary dwellings or areas.

II.—COUNTY COUNCIL HOLDING THE LAND.

It has been found, over and over again, that people have been evicted for improvements and that when block dwellings have been built for them by companies or trustees, the evicted poor have never got into them. Sometimes the rents are too high; sometimes there is no accommodation for the "costers'" barrows, or the little home industry, and so the evicted families have gone out to crowd other slums. As to the rent, companies expect, and some receive, 5 per cent. The London County Council can borrow at 3 per cent. It is no use to build houses for people and offer them at rents they cannot pay.

* There is an ancient precedent for this. In case of widening a highway the justices assessed the value of the land taken.

† In the case of freeholder, lessee, and sub-lessee, the parties ought to have provided for sanitation, and it is not fair that the community should pay more for the house than if owned by one person. As to the relations between Freeholders, Middlemen, and House Knackers, see Report, p. 21, 2nd edit. p. 36.

III.—FUNDS REQUIRED.

It is useless to expect the ratepayers to pay much more in rates than they do at present; and it is impossible to throw the cost of housing the poor in the richest city in the world on the general Income Tax payers living in all parts of the kingdom. The remedy is therefore a tax on London landlords. Whether this end be gained by means of a direct tax, like Income tax, or by a municipal death duty, is open to discussion.* However, charity lands should be exempt, and also exemption should be made in the case of properties in the hands of people of small means, so that no part of the tax would fall either on the working man, who by his industry and thrift has acquired (perhaps through a building or land society) a house or little plot of land, or on others with very limited incomes. The exemptions from Income Tax provide a suitable precedent and form a guide for such exemptions.†

* See Report of Financial and Compensation Committee of the Conference on the Housing of the People (Veale, Chifferiel & Co).

† As to condition of Cottages in Rural Districts, see Report of Royal Commission, pp. 24, 79; 2nd edit. pp. 41, 126; Report of Second Meeting of Conference on Housing of the People. The Reports of the Medical Officers of Health in Rural Districts are often very valuable, but unfortunately the Boards of Guardians sometimes prefer not to print them. Summaries will usually be found in the *Lancet* and *British Medical Journal*. Especial reference may be made to Report of Dr. Thresh for Chelmsford and Maldon Rural Sanitary Districts (*Essex County Chronicle* office). As to water supply in London, see pamphlet published by Mansion House Council on the Dwellings of the Poor; and as to want of water in Rural Districts, see Article by the present writer in the County and Local Government Magazine (Knight & Co.) for December, 1890. Dr. Thorne Thorne's Report on the use and influence of Hospitals for Infectious Diseases, published as a supplement to the Report of the Local Government Board for 1882 (C. 3290), price 14s. 6d., is most valuable as showing the need for isolation and the advantages of free hospital accommodation in infectious cases. See pp. 29, 111, 192, and 240 of that work; pp. 141, 150, 256, 278, 292, 306 and 359 may also be consulted.

For a brief explanation of the Housing Act, 1890, as affecting the villages, see Appendix I., next page. The process of closing and demolition, it will be seen, is practically identical with that for London; see pp. 19, 20.

APPENDIX I.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890,

AND

Why it will NOT House the Rural Labourers.

Part II. of this Act is taken up with provisions for shutting up houses which are "so dangerous to health as to be unfit for human habitation," and further powers for demolishing those which are not only unfit for human habitation, but actually dangerous to the public or the neighbourhood—that is, to the people who live near or walk past. Even here the utter feebleness of the Act is plain. You cannot compel a landlord to shut up a cottage because it is *only* "dangerous to health," it must also be "unfit for human habitation" in the eyes of the Board of Guardians (elected on the six-vote system)* and of magistrates who are usually landlords. Here is a brief description of the tedious process. There may be *seventeen* stages before the sanitary authorities can pull down a house. The process even for obtaining a closing order (*i.e.*, shutting up the house is usually, in practice, far too slow, while that for securing the demolition of the house is simply scandalously long.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS TO OBTAIN CLOSING ORDER.

1. Four Householders make written representation.†
2. Medical Officer inspects.‡
3. Medical Officer represents to Board of Guardians.
4. If it *appears to the Board* that the house is so dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation they take proceedings for closing the house. ||
5. They serve a notice on the owner or occupier. ¶
6. Application to magistrates for summons.
7. Hearing of summons by magistrates (with perhaps adjournments).
8. Here the Landlord may hang up the matter for some time by appealing to Quarter Sessions.**

Let us assume now that closing order has been obtained. The following are the

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS FOR DEMOLITION.

9. Resolution by Guardians that *it is expedient* to order demolition of building.

*A man who is both owner and occupier may have *twelve* votes.

+ S. 31. ‡ S. 32. If he does this of his own accord, step No. 2 is saved.

|| S. 32.

¶ Schedule

** S. 32. (2), and *see* S. 269 of P. H. Act, 1875.

10. One month's notice to the owner.
11. Hearing of owner by the Board, with possible adjournments.
12. If owner undertakes to do needful works, lapse of a *reasonable* time, as specified in the order.
13. Possibly extension of time by Board, or the landlord may apply to the magistrates and obtain extension of time.
14. Order for demolition.
15. Three months.
16. But this is *not all*, for within one month after the notice of the order for demolition the owner may appeal to Quarter Sessions.
17. Nor is *this all*. The court shall, at the request of either of the parties, require "a case to be stated" (this is a special kind of appeal) for the High Court.

This process is costly, and it will be found that in many cases part (if not all) of the costs will be thrown on the *rates*. It is no wonder that Boards of Guardians often hesitate to put the law in motion.

But observe what is the net result when the house is closed or pulled down. One poor family is homeless, or even if the landlord repairs the house instead of closing it he probably raises the rent. When, however, the result is that the cottage is properly repaired, some good is effected.

SUPPLYING A NEW COTTAGE AFTER AN OLD ONE IS CONDEMNED.

Let us suppose that the Board has obtained an order for demolition of a cottage. And it naturally occurs to the Board that it is not much good to demolish one dwelling unless it provides a better. The Act supplies the following ludicrous* process for buying an area of which the land of the condemned cottage formed a part:—

1. Resolution of Board of Guardians.
2. Preparation of Scheme.
3. Notices to every owner, or reputed owner, lessee or reputed lessee, and occupier of any part of the area comprised in the scheme.
4. Petition to Local Government Board.
5. Local inquiry by Local Government Board.
6. Order by Local Government Board sanctioning scheme.
7. Local authority may purchase land by agreement, *i.e.*, at landlord's own prices.

If the authority will not pay each landlord and lessee what he likes to ask, the costly procedure is as follows:—

8. Notice in *London Gazette*.
9. More notices to owners in every part of the area.
10. Any owner may petition Local Government Board.†
11. If such petition is presented and not withdrawn, the order of Local Government Board will require an *Act of Parliament* to confirm it, and the landlord may oppose, both before Committees of House of Commons and House of Lords.‡ The Committees have full power to award costs. They are generally very heavy.

* S 39.

† If there is no such petition Local Government Board may confirm the order without further ado.

‡ See SS. 39 (8), 9.

OTHER SCHEMES FOR RECONSTRUCTION.

The Act likewise empowers the Guardians (where they think that the closeness, or bad condition, etc., of any buildings, or the want of light, air, etc., or any other sanitary defect in any buildings is dangerous, and that demolition or reconstruction of the buildings, or of some of them, is necessary) to prepare a scheme for reconstruction. Then come (as before, *see p.*) notices; petition to Local Government Board; local inquiry; then, if the Board cannot obtain land by agreement with *all* the landowners, publication of Local Government Board order in *London Gazette*; more notices to owners; and, if any owner petitions against the Local Government Board order, there must be an Act of Parliament, with liability to costs in Houses of Commons and Lords as before! It is really to offer a stone, instead of bread, to give a process of this kind for agricultural labourers.

Then, after all this, there will be an arbitration to assess the *compensation* which the Board will have to pay the landlords. There are here some provisions as to reducing compensation in the case of insanitary dwellings, which are a step in the right direction, * though quite insufficient.

As a rule the defective sanitation of *villages* occurs from bad (or no) drainage, or defective water supply, *i.e.*, the inhabitants drink from wells close to cess-pools and polluted with sewage, or perhaps from ponds and ditches; or else the houses themselves are practically, though not *legally*, unfit for human habitation, or there are not enough cottages. It would be bad economy for ratepayers to buy a typhoid village. They had better spend the money in building a new village in the neighbourhood, where the land is not saturated with sewage, etc.

I now proceed to Part III. of the Act, which applies to the acquisition of land in general, and not merely to land where some house has been condemned, or to crowded alleys, etc.

This Act pretends to give to the Guardians power of compulsory purchase; but it clogs the power, so that they are *unable*, and, having regard to the heavy costs which fall on the rates, they will be *unwilling* to exercise it. You may as well tell a man to walk after you have tied his legs, as tell Boards of Guardians to build rural cottages under this Act. In those districts which are practically towns, the Guardians *might* perhaps (if they like) do some good under this Act by letting common Lodging Houses, &c. But as these Boards are now constituted are they likely to do this? And few ratepayers would approve that the Board (with magistrates as *ex-officio* members), should spend rates in buying landlords' insanitary cottages at such price as the landlords fix.

“SHAM & POWER COMPULSORILY TO ACQUIRE LAND.”

The Act gives no power to any inhabitants, or householders, to make a formal representation that more cottages are needed, nor does it even say it is the duty of the medical officer, or of the Board of Guardians to enquire whether such is the case. The Act declares (rightly enough) that it is their duty to turn people out of grossly insanitary dwellings, but it does not declare it to be their duty to see that wholesome ones are provided. This part of the Act is wholly *permissive* and

* S. 4.

§ The word “Sham” is not in the Act, but the reader will see the power is a “Sham” for Villages.

has no effect whatever until it is formally "adopted" by the Board of Guardians. The following is an outline of the toilsome steps for its "adoption." See s. 55.

1. Board of Guardians *may* apply to the County Council for "certificate" to enable them to adopt the Act.
2. County Council appoints person to hold inquiry.
3. The Inquirer to report that (1) accommodation is necessary; (2) no likelihood that it will be provided unless the Act is adopted; (3) that having regard to the liability on the rates, it is "prudent" for the Board of Guardians to provide accommodation.
4. Publication of certificate in one or more newspapers, if the County Council thinks fit.
5. *Wait* for next election of Board of Guardians unless the County Council allow immediate adoption in case of "emergency." This gives the Landlords, some of whom have *Twelve* votes, a capital chance of wrecking the plan.
6. Board *may* adopt the Act.

Then when the Act is adopted, the Board may buy land, if the landowners will sell it. But if the latter refuse to sell, or charge an outrageous price, the Guardians may obtain powers of compulsory purchase. To make out what these are we are driven to the Public Health Act, 1875. The process appears to be as follows:—

1. Advertisements and deposit of plan in November.*
2. Notices to and inquiries of all owners, lessees, reputed owners, etc., of land proposed to be taken.
3. Petition by Board of Guardians to Local Government Board with detailed statements as to the land, etc., and such evidence as the Local Government Board may require.
4. Local inquiry by Local Government Board.
5. Notices of advertisement of proposed order.†
6. Provisional Order by Local Government Board. (But this order is of no force until it is confirmed by *Act of Parliament*.)
7. If a petition is presented against the Bill it may be referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, and the petitioner may appear and oppose as in the case of Private Bills. Of course, again, the costs of an opposed petition are enormous, and it is *very* unusual to make a landowner opposing the taking of his land to pay.
8. Ditto. ditto, in the House of Lords.
9. Act of Parliament to confirm the Provisional Order of the Local Government Board.
10. If the Board should refuse to pay the price the owner puts on the land they may have the price assessed. For this we are driven to the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the subsequent statutes amending it. Of all methods of compulsory purchase known to English law this is the *most costly*.

As to costs of the landowner, these are payable in general by the Board of Guardians‡ thus:—

1. Costs of the landowner's witnesses, and of his solicitors and counsel

* Public Health Act, 1875, S. 176.

† Public Health Act, 1875, S. 297.

‡ The cheaper system under Public Health Act, 1875, S. 180 (13) does not apply here, see *ex parte Rayner*, 3 Q.B.D. 446.

on the arbitration (unless arbitrators award the same or a less sum than the Board offered for the land).†

2. Landowner's costs of making out title, conveyance, &c.‡

And the Board will have to pay the costs of their own solicitors, witnesses, and counsel. In some cases of disputed compensation the money has to be paid into court, and the Board may have to pay another group of expenses.§

Look at the result. If the Board wish to buy ten acres of rural land for cottages and gardens attached, they had far better, than go to compulsory purchase, pay the landlord *three times* the value

How will any Board of Guardians be likely to buy under a wretched system of this kind? If the Board does provide cottages, the cost will fall on the rates, and the ratepayers will have to pay off both capital and interest until the whole sum is paid off. Cottages would be provided for the farms, and the landlords would be able to let the farms all the easier because decent homes were provided for the men who till the soil. If in ten years ten Boards of Guardians adopt this part of the Act and build each ten cottages, we shall be much surprised.

The whole process is even more complicated than that under the Allotments Act, 1887.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE REFORMS.

- (1) District (or Parish) Councils, elected on the "one man one vote" system, without rating or property qualification.
- (2) Medical Officers of Health, paid out of the taxes a sufficient sum, and placed in a more independent position.
- (3) Elective Magistrates as in Scotch boroughs ||
- (4) A shorter method for dealing with insanitary dwellings.
- (5) One simple and uniform method of compulsory purchase, with only reasonable compensation and costs, as in Bills of Mr. R. T. Reid, Q.C., M.P. (See p. 25).
- (6) The landlord should not receive MORE than the just value ¶ of any insanitary house. (See p. 25.)
- (7) The Principle of Betterment to be introduced.
- (8) A limited tax on the landlords, to provide money for housing the poor. But no tax to be imposed on people with incomes under £150 a year; and on incomes between £150 and £400 the tax should not be charged on the first £120.

[See Report of the "Financial and Compensation" Committee of the "Housing Conference" as to this suggestion, and also for a proposal as to death duties on landed property. They suggest that all charity property and also the estates of persons leaving property of less total value than £1,000 should be totally exempt.]

† L.C.C. Act, 1845, S.34.

‡ *id.* S. 82.

§ *id.* S. 80.

|| Recommendations Nos. 1, 3, 5, are in substance adopted from the Report of the Committee on Housing of the People in *Rural* Districts, appointed by the "Conference on the Housing of the People," where the grounds for them are more fully stated. Copies of this Report and of the Report of the Committee of the same Conference appointed to consider the financial aspects of the Housing question may be obtained from Messrs. VEALE, CHIFFERIEL & CO., 37, Cursitor Street, E.C., price 1d. each.

¶ Under the Act, compensation is somewhat reduced to some extent as to such houses under Part I. (but this does not apply to Rural Sanitary districts), and also as to houses dealt with under the "Obstructive Building" and "Reconstruction" sections, but these will seldom or never be used in rural districts. See above, p. 30.

APPENDIX II.

List of Books, etc., on the Housing of the People, AND SUBJECTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

It will be understood that no attempt is here made to give anything like a complete synopsis of the literature on this vast subject, but it is thought that even this imperfect list may be useful to some readers.

1.—Literature connected with “Housing,” etc., now in the Gladstone Library of the National Liberal Club.

“Reports of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland,” 2 vols. (Official), 1885. Vol. 2 contains the Evidence.

“Reports from the Select Committee on Artizans’ and Labourers’ Dwellings” (Official), 1881–2.

“Reports of the Select Committee on Town Holdings,” 1890 (with index). Other Parliamentary Papers.

“Vital Statistics,” by Dr. William Farr (Stanford, 1885).

Ditto by A. Newsholme (Sonnenschein, 1889).

“Sanitas Sanitatum, etc.,” by Richard Metcalfe, 1887.

“Health and its Appliances” (*Engineering*), by Donald Nicoll.

“Quain’s Dictionary of Medicine.” See Tit., “Public Health.”

“Subjects of Social Welfare,” by Sir Lyon Playfair (Cassell & Co., 1889).

“Life and Labour among London Poor,” by Charles Booth (Williams and Norgate).

“City Slums, etc.,” by J. Gordon McCullagh (Sonnenschein, 1889).

“English Sanitary Institutions,” by Sir John Simon (Cassell & Co., 1890).

“Prize Essay on the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890,” by F. H. Millington (Cassell & Co.). A most useful work.

“British Medical Journal,” “Lancet,” etc.

Publications of the “Société Française des Habitations à Bon Marché” (Bureaux de la Société, 15 Rue de la Ville-l’Évêque, Paris).

The following Tracts, etc., are in Boxes. See No. 384.

Various Reports of Committees of the “Conference on the Housing of the People,” and papers read at meetings of the Conference, viz :—

- (1) “Report of First Meeting,” with papers, by Dr. Louis Parkes, Mr. Costelloe, L.C.C., and Mr. Fred. Scott.

- (2) "Report of Financial and Compensation Committee."
 - (3) "Interim Report of Rural Committee."
 - (4) "Report of Sanitation Committee" (Metropolis).
 - (5) "Interim Report of Committee on London Housing."
 - (6) "Leaflet on Public Health Bills," 1891.
 - (7) "Report of Second Meeting," with paper on the "Home of the Farm Labourer," by Mr. E. O. Fordham, and "Speech by Sir Walter Foster, M.P."
 - (8) "Questions to Rural Guardians on Sanitation, etc."
 - (9) "List of Lecturers of the Conference."
- "Homes of the Poor" (Macmillan & Co.), W. St. John Brodrick.
- "A Dishonoured Nation" (*Contemporary Review*, August, 1880), Rev. F. Barham Zinke.
- "Industrial Villages" (Sonnenschein, 1884), Rev. Henry Solly.
- "Reports, etc., of Mansion House Council on the Dwellings of the Poor," "Ministry of Health," "London Water Supply," etc. (Obtainable from Mr. John Hamer. See p. 12 above.)
- "Housing of the Working Classes" (Liberal Publication Department, 1889), J. Theodore Dodd.
- "Summary of First Rep. of Royal Commission" (above-mentioned).
- "London Municipal Reform League," 1885.
- "Birmingham Proceedings on Adoption of Housing Scheme," with speech by Joseph Chamberlain, Esq., 1875.
- "Better Dwellings for Workmen of London" (Simpkins, 1884).
- "Homes of the Poor in Westminster" (Rivington, 1885), by Rev. Alfred Jones.
- "The Harvest of the Streets, etc." (Boys' Home, 95 Southwark Street, 1882), J. W. C. Fegan.
- "Artizans' Dwellings Acts: Reports of Delegates from Metropolitan Vestries, etc." (Harrison & Sons, 1880).
- "Dwellings for the Lower Classes," 1871, James Hole and others.
- "Faculties (legal) for Improving Dwellings of the People" (Emily Faithful, 1864), Thomas Hall.
- "Artizans' Dwellings Act and Peabody Trust," (reprinted from *Truth*, October 27, 1881).
- "Proceedings at Public Meetings for Improving Dwellings, etc" (the Lord Mayor in the Chair), 1859.
- "Paper read before the Statistical Society," 1875, by Charles Gatliff, Esq., F.S.S.
- "Don't Tax, but Untax, the Dwellings of the Poor" (Ridgway, 1850), G. Paulett Scrope, Esq., M.P. (article in *Quarterly Review*, 1884).
- "Interim Report by the Council of the Federation of Working Men's Social Clubs, on the Subject of the Housing of the Working Classes," 1890.
- See also Tracts under title "Poor," in Boxes 214, 329, 412, and p. 38, *n. infra*

2.—General Literature.

Much information on the subjects connected with this paper is to be found in the Annual Reports of the Medical Officers of Health, which are sent to the Local Government Board. The Local Government Board Reports should also be consulted.

“The Supplement to the 10th Annual Report of the Local Government Board,” 1882, contains Dr. Thorne Thorne’s Report on “The Use and Influence of Hospitals for Infectious Diseases.” See p. 27, *n.* above.

“The Reports of the London County Council on Housing, etc.,” are valuable.

Cornwall County Council has published a useful Report, summarising the Reports of the Medical Officers of Health in the County. It is much to be wished that other Counties would publish like summaries.

Recently Parliamentary Papers have been published showing what localities have adopted the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act and the Public Health Act, 1890. But it is impossible here to attempt to indicate the mass of Parliamentary Papers and other public documents dealing with Housing and Sanitation.

The following may be procured from Mr. John Naughten, 20 Cursitor Street, E.C.—“Dr. Greenhorn’s Report,” 1858; “The First Series of Public Health Reports,” 1859-71; “Second Series,” 1874-1876; “Third Series,” 1878-1889.

Mr. Naughten keeps a large stock of old Blue Books, and other Parliamentary Papers.

“Report of the Social Economy Section of the Paris Exhibition of 1889.” See p. lxxvii, and sec. xi. “Working Men’s Houses,” page 323, *et seq.*

“International Health Exhibition” publications (Clowes & Son).

“Domestic Sanitary Arrangements of the Metropolitan Poor,” by Dr. Tripe.

“Domestic Sanitation in Rural Districts,” by Dr. Wilson.

“Sanitary Houses for the Working Classes in Urban Districts,” by H. P. Boulnois, M.I.C.E.

“Overcrowding,” by Rev. A. Mearns.

“Suggestions to the Royal Commissioners on the Dwellings of the Poor,” by C. M. Sawell.

“Conditions Essential for Healthy Dwellings in an Urban or Rural Locality,” by H. H. Collins, F.R.I.B.A.

“Legal Obligations in Relation to the Dwellings of the Poor,” by Henry Duff, B.C.L.

“Health in the Village,” by Sir H. W. Acland, F.R.S.

“Village Health and Village Life,” by Sir H. W. Acland, F.R.S.

“Home of the Agricultural Labourer,” by Dr. Bond.

"Sanitary Defects in Village and Country Districts, and how to remedy them," by Dr. Wilson.

"The English Village Community," by F. Seebohm.

Raffalovitch's "Logement de Pauvre" (Procurable through Hatchard's).

"Sanitary Condition of City and Country Dwelling Houses," G. E. Waring.

"Village Improvements and Farm Villages," G. E. Waring.

"Village Politics," C. W. Stubbs.

"Public Hygiene in America," by H. I. Bowerditch.

"The Dwellings of the Labouring Classes," by H. Roberts.

"Parkes' Practical Hygiene," Dr. Du Chaumont (Churchill & Co.).

"Handbook of Hygiene," by Dr. Wilson.

"Later Leaves," by Montague Williams, Q.C.

Numerous Articles and Papers in "Public Health," "Sanitary Record," etc.

"The Social and National Influence of the Domicillary Condition of the People" (three addresses), by Sir Robert Rawlinson, C.E., C.B.
P. S. King & Son, King Street, Westminster, S.W., 1883.

Health Primer, "The House and its Surroundings," Hardwicke & Bogue,
192 Piccadilly, 1878.

"Model Houses for the Industrial Classes," by Banister Fletcher; 2nd Edit.

"Marsh's Handbook of Rural Sanitary Science" (Smith & Elder, 1876).

"The Town Dweller," by Dr. Milner Fothergill (Lewis).

"Gomme's Village Communities."

The publications of the "Société Française des Habitations à Bon Marché," (15 Rue de la Ville-l'Evêque, Paris), of the National Health Society (Berners Street, Oxford Street, W.), and of the Social and Sanitary Society (1 Ventnor Terrace, Edinburgh).

The following is a brief list of modern law books on Public Health under the names of their authors—Bazalgette and Humphreys, Chambers, Fitzgerald, Glen, Lumley, Smith (Bovill).

A companion volume by H. Macmorran to Lumley's Public Health is now published, containing the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890 (Shaw & Sons, Fetter Lane). Messrs. Shaw also have printed forms of proceedings under that Act under Parts I., II. Messrs. Knight have also published a book on the Housing Act of 1890, by Messrs. W. C. Bernard and H. Morgan-Brown.

No. 3.—Articles in Periodical Literature extracted from Poole's Index to Periodical Literature published in 1883.

Dwellings: Artizans', Brit. Q., 51, 343.*

——— City-Leased, Brit. Q., 69, 301.

* The first numeral refers to the volume, the second to the page.

- Dwellings : Country, for Town Labourers (J. F. Dawson), *J. Statist. Soc.* 22, 362.
- Effects on Health and Morals of (C. Gatliff), *J. Statist. Soc.*, 30, 33.
- for Artizans at Mulhouse, "St. James'," 22, 109.
- Improvement Question, "Good Words," 15, 515.
- of London Poor (W. Gilbert), "Good Words," 13, 458.
- of the Poor, "Chambers' Journal," 43, 252.
- and Sanitary Legislation (G. W. Child) "Contemporary Review," 32, 279.
- Overcrowded, Prevention Act, 1857, Tait, N.S., 24, 559.
- Sanitary Construction of (W. H. Corfield), "Electrical Engineer," 22, 177, 281.
- Sanitary and Constructive Supervision of (L. Angell), "Electrical Engineer," 25, 288.
- Working Men's, "Old and New," 4, 749.
- House Accommodation of England and Wales (R. H. J. Palgrave), *J. Statist. Soc.*, 32, 411.
- Houses of Poor in Towns, Cornh. 30, 74.
- Homes of Working Men, Tait, N.S., 27, 594.
- of the London Poor, "Chambers' Journal," 53, 230.
- English Working Men's (H. H. Barber), "Unitarian Review," 6, 370.

Ditto. Supplement, 1882 to 1887.

- Houses for the Poor, "Chambers' Journal," 60, 813.
- Healthy, by F. L. Oswald (Lippincott), 33, 97, 569.
- London (J. G. Rosengarten), *Amer.* 3, 265.
- of the Working Classes (C. Mackeson), *Br. Alma. Comp.* 86, 84.
- Dwellings for London Labouring Classes (J. Plummer), *Br. Alma. Comp.*, 71, 91.
- Labourers' and Artizans' (Marquis of Salisbury), "National Review," 2, 301—(J. Chamberlain), "Fortnightly Review," 40, 761.
- of the Poor (R. A. Cross), "Nineteenth Century," 15, 150—(H. D. Harrod), "Monthly," 50, 344—(C. Mackeson), *Br. Alma. Comp.*, '84, 117, "Quarterly," 157, 144.
- and Social Discontent (A. Austin), "National," 2, 462.
- Sanitary Construction of (W. H. Corfield), *Kansas R.*, 3, 420.

Reference may also be made to "Common Sense and the Dwellings of the Poor," by Miss Octavia Hill, in "Nineteenth Century" of December, 1883, p. 925.

"Houses of the Poor," Mary Jeune, "Fortnightly Review," January, 1890, 53, 67.

"Tenement House Reform." "Our Day," V. Apr. 353.

"Tenement House Problem, 1888," Forum, 5, 207, Apr.

"Houses of the Poor in Germany," "Review of Reviews," 11; Dec., 691.

Among more recent Periodical Literature reference may be made to
 "Homes of the People" (Earl Compton), "New Review," 1889, 1, 47;
 "Re-Housing the Poor in London" (H. Cox), 1890, "Westminster
 Review," 134, 611 (D.); "Healthy Homes for the Working Classes."
 (D. F. Schloss) 1888, "Fortnightly," 49, 526.

*The following magazine articles, &c., also bear on the subject.**

State of the Labouring Classes, 1832, "Fraser," 2, 572.

Labourers in Cities and Towns, 1834, "Fraser," 9, 62.

Labourers' Tenements, 1842, "Penny Magazine," 11, 437.

Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Classes, 1848, "Quarterly," 71, 417.

The Labourer's Home, 1847, "Howett's Journal," 1, 61.

The Condition of the Labourers, 1848, "The Christian Remembrancer," 16, 317.

Labour and Life, 1856, "Tait's Edin. Mag.," 23, 385.

Labourers' Cottages, 1860, "Quarterly," 107, 267.

The Labouring Poor of England, 1863, "Temple Bar," 7, 55.

Dwellings and Food of the Labouring Classes, 1865, "Christian
 Remembrancer," 50, 15.

The Labouring Poor of London, 1867, "All the Year Round," 17, 414.

Dwellings for the London Labouring Classes, 1871. "Brit. Al.," 91.

Dwellings Improvement Question, 1894, "Good Words," 15, 515.

John Smith's Shanty (R. Jeffries), 1874, "Fraser," 89, 135.

English Working Men's Homes (C. Bernard), 1876, "Scribner," 13, 348.

Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act (J. Plumer), 1878, "Brit. A.C.,"
 110.

Homes for the People, 1878, "Western," 4, 448 and 527.

Dwellings of the Poor and Sanitary Legislation (J. W. Child), 1878,
 "Contemporary," 32, 297.

City Leased Dwellings, 1879, "Brit. Quart.," 69, 301.

Homes for the People (R. T. Paine, jun.), 1882, "American Journal
 Statis. Sci.," 15, 104.

The Peabody Homes for the Poor, 1882, "Sunday Mag.," 2, 249.

Homes for Poor, 1883, "Chambers' Journal," 60, 813.

Labourers' and Artisans' Dwellings, 1883 (J. Chamberlain), "Fortnightly,"
 40, 761.

The Housing of the Poor, 1883, "Leisure Hour," 33, 19.

The Dwellings of the Poor, 1884, "Quarterly Review," 157, 144.

* A list of the articles on this subject in recent periodical literature has just been made for the library of the National Liberal Club, and those mentioned in this section are extracted therefrom.